

The Shiny New Thing that really helps!



Author: Paul Wilkinson, speaker SRVISIONDAYS

His contribution on the 7th of April 2022, 11:50 hrs CET: 'The Shiny New Thing that really helps!' (Organize Flow)

We have always been obsessed with 'Shiny New Things' in IT management, ever since ITIL emerged as a solution to our IT management woes. We have since gone on to invest in ITIL2, ITIL3 and now ITIL4. Each reincarnation being triggered by cries that 'ITIL doesn't solve our problems'! We then leapt onto the Lean, Agile and DevOps bandwagons, practiced unsafe SAFe and now are embracing 'Digital Transformation' as the latest Shiny New Thing.

In the wake of all of these adoptions the landscape was littered with the corpses of failed 'implementations'. It seems that each Shiny New Thing that we adopt is accompanied by complaints that 'they' – the frameworks – don't deliver on the hoped for promises. There are cries that the frameworks are flawed or no longer fit-for-purpose. But the flaws and the fit are not the main reasons for failing. It is the way in which we try to 'implement' them. It would appear that the framework is the goal, not what we are trying to achieve by using them. 'We are an agile club!', 'We're implementing DevOps', 'we've done ITIL'.

Back in 2008 we wrote our first book exploring reasons for failing and came up with our ABC 'worst practices' publication (Attitude, Behavior, Culture). We concluded that ABC was *the number 1* success or fail factor underpinning the successful adoption of new ways of working. After all, if you look at it, each of these frameworks are designed to change the way people behave. This requires buy-in and acceptance (attitude), and when behaviors are consistently and repeatedly performed and owned they become *'the way we do things around here'* (Culture). Unfortunately though, our training and certification in shiny new things doesn't address the ABC aspects.

Since 2008 we see the same ABC challenges with each Shiny New Thing. When we first heard the word 'Transformation' we knew that a large amount would fail. Indeed various recent Industry reports confirm our suspicions, revealing that '70% fall short of hoped for results'. I analyzed these reports to identify common reasons for failure. They are the same as back in 2008. 1) Lack of business understanding and alignment to strategy, 2) poor leadership commitment and behavior, 3) failing to develop the right skills and behaviors (too much focus on the 'certificate' and not enough focus on the softer skills and change management), 4) culture change including resistance to change, 5) failure to embed continual learning and improving.

And yet, when I submit a speaking proposal at a conference to present ABC I hear *'No, we've already done ABC years ago when you first launched it! That is old. Haven't you got something new like AI, Machine Learning or Transformation!?'*. Confirming our insatiable appetite for shiny new, rather than getting the basics right.

In a recent article about the Shiny New thing I suggested simply renaming the ABC book 'The Shiny New Thing that Really helps' Perhaps people will then want it. I will immediately get a load of emails asking

where they can get *'The Shiny New Thing that really helps'* foundation certificate and consultants will be saying that they already have years of expertise with shiny new things, asking where they get the fast track bridging certificate to the Master certificate in *'The Shiny New Thing that really helps'*? And tool providers will be declaring that their tool is *'The Shiny New Thing that really helps'* compliant.

Isn't it that because of all the new new things we're like that to the ultimate flow? Come and experience it during SRVISIONDAYS on April 6 & 7, 2022, Kinopolis Utrecht!

Sign up: knvi.nl/agenda

Member advantage: KNVI members can participate for free for 1 day; the other day with a large discount.